

**Early Mental Health Initiative
Request for Application—EMHI 2008**

Orange County Information Meeting—February 26, 2008
Sacramento Information Meeting—March 5, 2008

Questions and Answers

GENERAL INFORMATION

Has the RFA been changed from last year?

There have been some changes since last year. Some of the most notable ones are:

- 1) Part 1 is again worth 10 possible deduction points; last RFA it was 5 points.
- 2) The RFA is clearer in noting that tables and matrices do not need to be double spaced.
- 3) The evaluation cost to be included in the budget is \$1000 per site.
- 4) The number of sites for districts and regionalized districts has been modified. Please refer to Section II.C to find the numbers which pertain to your application.
- 5) The notification of programs who did not receive a passing score or for whom there are insufficient funds to award their application has been clarified. Also, the notification of programs being awarded funds is also more fully explained. Please read Section J on page vi.
- 6) The ethnic categories of students on the Anticipated School Enrollment Information Chart (page 53) have been modified to coincide with CDE DATAQUEST to make it easier for applicants to access this information.

Please review the RFA closely so as to not miss any other minor changes which might affect your application.

Is there preference given to applicants enhancing their previously funded program over first time applicants?

Each grant is scored independently. If the applicant is asking for the same service again, the applicant does need to complete Part 1 where they could lose some additional points.

Can the EMHI grant forms be downloaded from the internet?

Yes, all of the forms may be downloaded in Adobe PDF or Microsoft Word formats with the exception of the two certification forms. Forms may be found through the DMH EMHI website at
www.dmh.ca.gov/Services_and_Programs/Children_and_Youth/EMHI.asp.

How should the Intent to Apply form be submitted?

Complete the Intent to Apply form by April 24, 2008. Fax the form to the EMHI office fax number at (916) 654-2739.

For an LEA applying for EMHI services for the first time, must the Compliance with EMHI-2008 Part 1 form be completed?

Everyone must complete the Certification Part 1 form.

If a site that should have been included in Part 1 is not, is there a 10 point deduction, a disqualification or both?

It will likely be both. It is a significant penalty. If it is a single site, it will be disqualified and the LEA will get a 10 point deduction. The DMH does not distinguish whether the site is included in a County Office of Education application or whether it is a district application. The Part 1 requirement applies regardless.

If the LEA is closing some school sites and having students transferring to other school sites, how best does the LEA address the anticipated demographics?

Make your best estimate and be sure to include information about it in the district and site level description. The actual numbers of students that are enrolled at the time the grant is awarded may make a difference during the budget negotiations.

Are district connected charter schools or independent charter schools eligible to apply?

They need to go through the LEA.

Could an LEA use currently provided services as match in the budget?

If you have a grant going off funding and can maintain some of the services with local funding, you can use that as match on the condition that the match is there for the entire three years.

How does EMHI change the traditional role of the mental health professionals?

The typical change is taking the mental health professionals out of providing the direct service. They are moving into more of a supervision and training role.

Are students receiving special education or 3632 services considered to be high risk and therefore not eligible to participate in EMHI programs?

Students who are emotionally disturbed or in need of 3632 mental health services would typically be considered to have needs which would be more severe than those addressed through EMHI programs. Students who are in special education for other reasons should not be differentiated from the remainder of the student body when being considered for EMHI services.

What parent services might be available through an enhancement?

Parent involvement is an important element in all EMHI programs. Some examples of parent services through an enhancement have ranged from Family Play nights to parent training programs or parent forums with guest speakers. There is a range of services available. Some programs will provide a parent resource library.

How would an enhancement be integrated with the direct service component?

The goal would be to enhance the direct services you are providing to children by providing services to parents, educators and other students in a manner that increases the likelihood that the direct services will provide successful results.

Examples might include:

- Training teachers and/or parents in skills that enhance their understanding of and skills for working with children experiencing school adjustment difficulties
- Parent training offered at school with a focus on including parents of those children served in the EMHI-funded program
- Providing classroom lessons that teach all students to use skills addressed in direct services
- Providing parent information and training related to specific social skills being taught in a direct service. In this case you might provide a parent education component where by you teach parents the same skills related to empathy, impulse control, problem solving and anger management which their children are learning.

Is there an evaluation process for the enhancement component of a grant?

There is an evaluation completed for the students participating in the direct service component of the grant. There is not a direct evaluation of the students being served by the enhancement component of the grant. Enhancement evaluation tends to be more of a process evaluation in relation to how many people participated in the activity.

PROGAM SERVICES

How many students do child aides typically see?

For PIP, typically a child aide working 15 hours per week would see 12 to 16 students. For a child aide working 15 hours per week in a group service model, 7 to 9 groups of students are typically seen.

Why are windows suggested for the EMHI activity room?

Windows allow the activity room to have natural light which is a nice amenity. The windows also provide a sense of safety and security.

Is it required that there be a window in the space identified for program services?

The DMH strongly encourages that there be a window to allow visual access to the room.

If the LEA is hiring new aides, should they wait until after the training conference to complete the screening forms?

Yes. Programs new to EMHI will not receive their evaluation forms until after attendance at the training conference.

Do the child aides participate in the parent conference?

Generally the child aides are present at the parent conference. Parents usually appreciate having the opportunity to meet the child aide who delivers the direct services to their children. The SBMHP, as the credentialed person in the program, takes the lead in the parent conference.

Are children living with grandparents and aunts or uncles considered to be in Out of Home Placement?

Yes, they are considered to be in out of home placement. A student not living with at least one biological parent or an adoptive parent is considered to be in out of home placement.

PROGRAM STAFFING

How is the applicant scored regarding the total amount of professional staff time?

There are issues of roles of different staff. There are some programs where the role of the project coordinator and the SBMHP might be more intermingled. When the applicant has multiple sites, there may be economy of scale.

How many hours per week are considered reasonable for the Mental Health Consultant?

It depends on the role of the MHC in the program. Their job duties should be explained thoroughly in the grant narrative. Be clear and specific about what they are going to be doing in the time that is allocated. Grant readers will be interested in reviewing whether the time allocation is reasonable for the noted job duties. There are a lot of variations among what is available in different areas of the state. Keep in mind that the minimal role is the role of facilitating linkages and helping with screening for people who need additional services.

If the LEA has a licensed mental health professional working at the school site who is working on a PPS credential, would the LEA be able to propose that individual as the SBMHP?

The RFA states that the SBMHP must be a person who has a Pupil Personnel Services credential.

The LEA currently has a mental health professional who does not have a Pupil Personnel Services credential. They will be adding a staff member

next year who will have a PPS credential. Can the two mental health professionals share the duties of the SBMHP?

The LEA needs to specify in the grant narrative what exists and to justify and clearly explain the use of the two staff members. There are places particularly in very rural areas where exceptions can be made. Keep in mind that there will still need to be a cooperating mental health entity.

What level of commitment does the Project Coordinator need to make? Does the project coordinator need to remain in place for all three years?

Ideally, the same person would be available to serve in the role of the Project Coordinator for all three years.

Can the Mental Health Consultant also serve as the School Based Mental Health Professional?

Our "Best Practice" has been that the MHC be an employee of the Cooperating Mental Health Agency and that the SBMHP be a school district employee. Since it is permissible to have a SBMHP with a PPS credential who is not a school district employee, this issue will be addressed during the training provided to the readers who score the applications. They will be instructed not to deduct points for a person assuming both roles if the individual has a Pupil Personnel Services Credential and also works for the mental health cooperating entity.

However, most grant reviewers will not be used to seeing this arrangement of personnel. If you use the same individual to be both the MHC and the SBMHP in your application, it is important that you discuss the circumstances in your district which led to this arrangement and how you plan to use it as an effective method to implement your proposed program.

If the district has an employee who is currently working as an instructional assistant, would it be advisable to hire that person as a child aide?

It is sometimes difficult for someone who is working in a position as a staff member doing direct instruction to make the transition to doing non-directive services, so programs generally do not use an instructional aide as a child aide. However, the choice of a child aide depends on the particular individual being considered. If you feel that you have an instructional aide who could best fill your needs of a child aide, you can certainly consider them for that role.

Who do the districts hire as child aides?

It varies from community to community. The Child Aides tend to be very caring, empathetic individuals who have a great love of children and want to do all they can to help them have a successful school experience. Typically Districts will hire child aides that have demonstrated an ability to build strong, nurturing relationships with children and have well -developed interpersonal skills that will allow them to win the cooperation and respect of the school staff. They should have an interest in learning new skills and be able to organize paperwork and schedule their time effectively. (In some cases school staff may already be

aware of a person at the site who would be effective and might be encouraged to apply.)

BUDGET

Is it allowable to use more than one budget form page?

Yes it is allowable for the applicant to use more than one page of the budget form if you need additional space.

Does it matter if the matching LEA's funds are federal or state funds?

It doesn't matter as long as you can count on the funds being there for the entire three year period.

Can administrative overhead costs be split between the LEA and the cooperating mental health entity?

The total allowable administrative overhead grant amount total is 5%. If there is administrative overhead amount is more than 5%, the additional amount can be used as match. Refer to the formula on page 47 of the RFA for the administrative overhead formula.

If the LEA covers a large geographical area, can the cost of travel between sites be used as match?

Yes, costs for travel related to providing program services described in the application narrative can be requested in the grant or included in match. The costs should reflect a reasonable travel reimbursement rate. Travel expenses are most often used for staff travel to supervision and training meetings, or to EMHI sponsored events (EMHI Training Conference, New Project Orientation, and Regional Meeting).

If outside agencies are going to come in and do program specific workshops, would their time go in the budget under personnel?

It would depend on the structure of the grant application; it could come under training or personnel. It should be clearly spelled out in the grant narrative under the need for training and supervision. Be clear and specific.

Is it allowable for the LEA to use an amount per hour instead of a per square foot cost in calculating the space amount in the budget?

Yes, that is allowable. In the narrative and the site principal's letter, the dimensions of the room should still be provided.